

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Martin Middle School (Cafeteria)

111 Brown Street

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

School Committee Meeting

October 26, 2005

Open Session

Mr. Gouveia, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. All members were present: Robert Faria, Eileen Lovett, David Medeiros, Mildred Morris, and Antone Gouveia. Also present: Mr. Manuel Vinhateiro, Superintendent of Schools and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Litigation, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

The School Committee reconvened the Public Session at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to return to open session, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Mrs. Morris and a Moment of Silence was observed.

Record of Previous Meetings ¶V A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to approve the minutes of the following meetings: August 23, August 30, September 6, 13, and 26, 2005, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Chair¶s Report ¶V Mr. Gouveia reminded everyone about the Townie Pride Parade. Mrs. Lovett related that the Townie Pride Parade will be stepping off at 6:30 PM; she asked everyone to please plan to arrive about 5:30 PM to line up at the baseball field at Pierce Field. Canned goods are being collected for the community center and books are being collected for the ¶§Books are Wings Program.¶” Mr. Gouveia commended the music students and encouraged all to attend their concerts. He also congratulated Mr. Michael Almeida, Principal of Riverside Middle School, on obtaining his Doctorate.

Schedule of 2006 School Committee Meetings ¶V A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to approve the schedule of meetings on the following dates: January 10, February 15, March 14, April 11, May 9 and June 13, 2006, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. All meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at East Providence City Hall at 7:30 PM. (Exception-Wednesday, February 15, 2006).

Hearings- None

Reading of Communications - None

Report of Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Gouveia requested that Item K jV Bus Contract Extension, be moved up on the agenda. A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to approve the extension, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. The impact on the 2005-06 budget is a \$48,000 savings. Mr. Gouveia noted that the Transportation Department is continuing to work to try to keep costs down and Mr. Limmeman was thanked for his efforts. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

FY 2004-05 Budget Update/Monthly Financial Statement- Mr. Vinhateiro related that the School Committee received the final statement for September, 2004-05 budget. Dr. Hilton reported that the budget is still on track to a balanced budget. Mr. Medeiros noted that the total is presently \$30,000 in the positive. Motion by Mr. Medeiros to approve, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 5-0.

Awarding of Bids jV A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to award the bid for Hydrostatic Testing to Fire Extinguisher Service Company for a total bid price of \$2,050, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Personnel Recommendations ¡V Mr. Gouveia spoke about the legacy of Mr. John MacNamara, (recently retired Music Director) which are the band and choral programs at Riverside and Martin Middle Schools and the music programs at the elementary schools; music has challenged students to do their very best. We will not hiring a new director, but will rely on the type of directorship developed under his leadership.

APPOINTMENTS

Julie Braga Spanish Teacher, SHS (1 year only)

(For teacher on extended personal leave through end of 2005-2006 school year)

Heather Pastina English Teacher, MMS (1 year only)

(For teacher on parental leave for 2005-2006 school year)

Patricia Dionne Senior Project Coordinator, SHS

Tabitha Watjen Freshman Class Advisor, SHS

Richard Silva Sophomore Class Advisor, SHS
(1 year only)

George Currier Academic Decathlon Coach, Literature, SHS

Helen Thompson Academic Decathlon Coach, Essay Writing, SHS

Susan Robertson Yearbook Advisor, RMS

Gail Ramos Head Teacher, Meadowcrest School

Kevin O'Grady Boys' Soccer, RMS

Motion: Morris/Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

RETIREMENT

John McNamara, III (31 years) Music Director

September 30, 2005

David Gold (28 years) Industrial Arts Teacher, SHS

December 1, 2005

Anna Snow (32 years) English Teacher, SHS

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Anita Demers (28 years) Speech/Language Pathologist

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Katherine Savage (28 years) Grade 3 Teacher, Oldham School

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Shirley Cook (27 years) Teacher Assistant, Waddington School

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Roberta McDonald (16 years) Teacher Assistant, Waddington School

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Ann Canavan (16 years) Teacher Assistant, MMS

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Cecile Cabral (10 years) Teacher Assistant, SHS

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Marie Albanese (21 years) Teacher Assistant, SHS

Close of 2005-2006 School Year

Mary DeMedeiros (20 years) Secretary, Maintenance Office, Adm. Bldg.

December 22, 2006

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0. (Mr. Faria expressed regret. Mrs. Morris expressed thanks for years of service and Mr. Gouveia commented that 300 years of experience will be going out the door, which is hard to replace).

RESIGNATIONS

Danielle Costa Supervisory Assistant, MJ Francis School

Effective October 7, 2005

Margarida Saunders Safety Patrol Coordinator, Oldham School

Effective Immediately

Lorna Swearingen Gay/Straight Alliance Advisor, SHS

Effective immediately

Jason Clancy Asst. Coach, Freshman Football, SHS

Effective immediately

Samantha Bennetti Assistant Coach, Girls' Indoor and Girls' Outdoor Track, SHS

Effective immediately

Kevin O'Grady Coach, Middle School Softball, RMS

Effective immediately

Robert Perry Coach, Middle School Wrestling, RMS

Effective immediately

Motion: Morris/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (MATERNITY)

Deana Dufficy Speech/Language Pathologist, MMS

Effective approximately January 17, 2006

Lynda Nelson English Teacher, RMS

Effective approximately February 17, 2006

Motion: Morris/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

**Barbara Lardner Sophomore Class Advisor, SHS
2005-2006 School Year**

**Greg McCarthy Coach, Girls' Basketball, RMS
2005-2006 School Year**

Motion: Morris/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Requests for Home Schooling ;VDr. Forbes recommended approval of five requests to home school students for the 2005-06 school year.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve the requests, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Dr. Forbes informed the School Committee that two parent informational sessions are being held tonight at Orlo Avenue School from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM and Hennessey on October 27, 2005 on Every Day Math.

FY 2005-2006 Budget ;V Mr. Patrick Caine, City Council member, asked to provide the School Committee with an update; he met with Blue Cross for both the City and the Schools. He shared that he does not agree with the budget process we use. The budget can be changed all year long; he hopes for a better process next year. He also talked with United Health regarding a change in rate in order to

realize savings. Health care represents 13% of the total budget and there are many different plans within the City and they are trying to bring them into the same realm and look at long term goals to bring them together. Combining groups could reduce the administrative rate, plan changes could be made with collective bargaining units; prescription groups together could be cheaper. The budget process needs to change; the City and the School Department is the same budget and we all need to work together; he pledged to do that. He said he will be meeting with the Superintendent in the next few days, looking for ways to save money and drive the budget down. Mr. Caine apologized for the circumstances at the September 15th meeting. He advised that he will be meeting with Blue Cross and United again in the near future.

Mr. Gouveia stated that the School Committee is committed to working with Mr. Caine and the City Council on budget issues.

Mrs. Lovett presented a resolution as follows: "§The School Committee is resolved to use its best efforts to look for ways to reduce the budget to come in line with the tax allocation that was passed by the City Council at its meeting on October 18, 2005." A motion was made by Mrs. Morris to accept the resolution, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Mr. Vinhateiro advised the School Committee that "§in order to

reconcile the budget and bring it in line with the recent City Council's appropriation/property tax allocation, the revised budget received by the School Committee reflects the following reductions:

Eliminate Salaries and Benefits From the Budget For the Following Positions:

- „X Four custodial positions**
- „X Secondary Curriculum Director Position**
- „X Music Director**
- „X One Industrial Arts Teacher**
- „X One Library Aide**

Other Reductions:

- „X Reduction in life insurance contract of \$100,000**
- „X Reduction in transportation Contract of \$48,000**
- „X Postpone the purchase of two new vehicles \$50,000**
- „X Elimination of the line item for School Resource Officers \$90,000**
- „X Continue to seek assistance from collective bargaining units for health insurance anticipated savings of \$500,000**

Revenue

- „X Increase anticipated tuition revenue by \$220,000**
- „X Increase Medicare revenues by \$60,000**

These reductions, plus many additional line item reductions (most totaling less than \$5,000), bring this budget in line with the City's appropriation. These proposed cuts in no way assist the School Department in moving forward; however, due to laws and regulations, we must align our budget to the funds allocated." Mr. Vinhateiro asked for a motion to accept this reconciled budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to accept the recommended budget for FY 2005-06, seconded by Mrs. Morris.

Mr. Faria said he was very disappointed to have to take this action. In planning to provide the best future for the School Department, the secondary Curriculum Director is important; the School Department needs some things more than others; the custodians, the Secondary Curriculum Director, etc. These cuts will have a major impact and he is very disappointed. The School Department plays a greater role than ever in how it impacts individual families, which cannot be measured in dollars. The School Committee will work harder with the City Council and will do everything to see that we do the best possible job.

Mr. Medeiros said he was not happy to do this either, but we must bring our budget in line with the city appropriation, according to state law.

Mrs. Morris said no one is happy about this, but under the direction of Mr. Vinhateiro, his staff and our wonderful teachers, we will still

provide a quality education for our students. Mr. Gouveia said the City is committed to fund the School Resource Officers for three additional years. The \$90,000 in the school budget was an attempt to share the expense, because we appreciate the School Resource Officers. The Chief is aware of the budget cuts and the SRO's will be with us three more years.

Mr. Gouveia asked Attorney Thomas to explain the Caruolo Act and what the School Committee would have to do to be in concert with that act. Attorney Thomas explained that the School Committee would have to appeal the budget to the City Council and if the School Committee were not satisfied with what the City Council decides, they can seek redress in Superior Court. The School Committee chose to reduce items to come in line with the City Council appropriation; however, the School Committee cannot reduce contractual obligations or items mandated by statute or regulation; services and programs in the public schools. We must demonstrate that items in the budget are absolutely necessary and we have made all possible reductions not regulated by contractual, statute or regulation. Mr. Thomas advised the School Committee must make best faith efforts to reduce items not under the above statutes, regulations, etc.

Mr. Gouveia said he is disappointed that in order to satisfy a group of taxpayers, the School Committee will receive complaints from other taxpayers, because we tried this last year. He will have them call the City Council. He is disappointed and stands ready to help in any way

he can to help the taxpayer. He felt that the Secondary Curriculum Director cut is a travesty, as there is only one Curriculum Director who also handles Title I in a school system of our size. The community lost the opportunity to step up at the secondary level, since East Providence High School lags behind in test scores. The elementary level is fine, but we have problems in other areas. Some are being resolved at the Middle Schools, yet we are cutting a secondary Curriculum Director for the second time. Certain items have a direct impact on education, he is sickened by it and would like to take everyone to court. Other systems this size have a Secondary Curriculum Director.

Mrs. Morris said she was very disappointed that more members of the community did not provide support and perhaps the City Council would have looked at the situation differently.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion to approve the amended budget recommended by the Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye.

Report of Sub-Committees - None

Unfinished Business - None

New Business - None

Payment of Bills

Federal Bill List

Warrant #000599 9/15/05 \$ 449,360.03

Local Operating Bill List:

Warrant #000602 9/30/05 \$1,017,528.49

Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Gouveia commented that during the budget meetings, a handful of people misstated and gave out wrong information to inflame the populace; one even insisted that teachers were putting pressure on parents. At the August 30th meeting, one individual said that he wanted to meet the School Committee on common ground. The School Committee was happy that parents did not bring kids to meetings, but they would have learned an invaluable lesson, since the kids would have seen a handful of mean, viscous and inflammatory adults with a microphone and a TV camera. Mr. Gouveia said he is proud of all staff; he does have a problem with contracts; same as the fire and police, but their was a mis-information monger, Mr. Gouveia asked what percentage was on the City side, found it was 87%. Mr. Gouveia said he appreciates everyone who spoke either against or in favor of the School Department budget; he is disappointed that we had to do what we did, but he will stand behind the Superintendent and work with the City Council and the City Manager to work toward a resolution for the entire community.

Mr. Faria asked about the status of the audit. Mr. Vinhateiro advised that the audit is ongoing, auditors are reviewing information and have started interviews with the administrative staff which will continue over the next several weeks.

A motion was made to adjourn by Mrs. Morris at 8:30PM, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Executive Secretary

David A. Medeiros, Clerk of the Committee